

## DELETION IN MOVIE SUBTITLING

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Received: 11-04-2018

Revised: 16-04-2018

Accepted: 31-04-2018

### Abstrak

Deletion in movie *subtitling* is a common practice due to limited space and time for subtitles to appear at the bottom of the screen. The limits are in terms of time for the subtitles to appear and be read by viewers and the number of characters to be shown on screen. Therefore, deletion is a strategy used especially for summarizing meaning or information from long dialogues. This is interesting because deletion should be implemented without deleting meanings or important information contained within the dialogues. Deletion is also considered to be used because viewers don't want to read long texts, as they are more focused on the scenes. This research is conducted to study types of deletion applied in movie subtitling and the impacts on delivering meanings to viewers. This research focuses on two movies, i.e. an adult action movie titled *13 Hours: The Secret Soldiers of Benghazi* (2016) and a children animated movie titled *Ice Age 5: Collision Course*, in which English is the source language and Indonesian is the target language. These two movies are selected to compare deletion applied on action movies for adults and movies for children. This research applies deletion theory by Karamitroglou (1997) that summarizes deletion types in movie subtitling, such as functional expressions that don't contain semantic aspects, cumulative adjectives, and responsive expressions. Those three types of deletion don't interfere with delivery of meaning to viewers because they are supported by other aspects, such as dialogues, images, and music. The results of this research show that some taboo expressions are found in the adult action movie, whereas exclamations are found more in the animated movie. This is in line with the types of the movies, so selection of utterances for the subtitles is made according to the viewers' age. Some of the expressions are translated, while some other are not. This is due to technical aspects related to the number of characters that can be shown for each line of the subtitles. The translated expressions are responsive ones, like *oh, fuck that, whoa, watch out, come on, all right, and yeah* as well as cumulative adjectives, like *a fucking massive heavy force*. The types of expressions that are not translated are responsive utterances like *Ew* in the animated movie *Ice Age 5*, expressions that indicate additional information like *(MEN ARGUING)*, *(GUNSHOT)*, *(LAUGHS)* in the action movie *13 Hours*, and expressions for additional information like *(SCREAMING)* and *(GRUNTING)* in *Ice Age 5*. The translated and untranslated expressions are functional expressions that don't contain semantic meaning, like *well* in both movies.

**Keywords:** translation, deletion, expressions, strategy.

### I. INTRODUCTION

Movie translation can be divided into two types: dubbing and subtitling. This research focuses on subtitling because it is more commonly used on foreign movies in Indonesia compared to dubbing. However, subtitling has its limitations in terms of delivering meaning, since there are some technical things that have to be applied, such as time limit for texts to appear on screen, limited number of characters that can be displayed, fonts, color, and texts position. Nevertheless, subtitling remains interesting as a topic to study. This is because the meaning in a movie can be delivered not only through subtitles that appear at the bottom of the screen. This statement is supported by Baker (1998) that says in a movie, meaning is delivered by combining four semiotic compositions, i.e. dialogues, music, subtitles, and images. Therefore, technical limitation does not interfere with delivery of meaning in a movie. Movie subtitlers must be able to select a strategy to translate the source language into the target language in a movie, while taking the technical limitation into consideration. Amongst all existing strategies, deletion is the most feasible. Karamitroglou (1997) states that there are some types of deletion that can be applied in movies subtitling, like deletion of expressions that don't contain semantic meaning, such as functional, cumulative adjectives or adverbial, and responsive expressions. Functional expressions are utterances

like *you know, well, and I say*. These expressions often appear when someone tries to continue what is being said. Cumulative adjectives are utterances like *great big, super extra, and teeny weeny*. The first word of an expression that combines adjectives or double adverbs can be put together into a single word, like *huge, extremely, tiny*. Responsive expressions are utterances like *yes, no, ok, please, thanks, thank you, and sorry*. These expressions are commonly used in daily conversations, so they can be omitted. However, when responsive expressions are used in slangs, like *yup, nup, oke, and tha*, they cannot be understood. Thus, they must be written in the subtitles. Two movies are used in this research: *13 Hours: Secret Soldiers of Benghazi* and *Ice Age 5: Collision Course*. *13 Hours: The Secret Soldiers of Benghazi* is a movie about an attack to the US Embassy in Libya, while *Ice Age 5: Collision Course* is a story about Manny and his friends who were trapped in an apocalyptic disaster or doomsday caused by cosmic events. Both movies are used as the data for this research and to identify differences of deletion strategy between an action movie for adults and an animated movie for children.

### II. METHOD

This research is qualitative descriptive, in which it uses descriptive data in the form of written or verbal words uttered by people being observed. This approach is directed to the background and the

people as a whole (Bog and Taylor: 1975). The research data is subtitles from the movies *13 Hours: Secret Soldiers of Benghazi* and *Ice Age 5: Collision Course*, in which English is the source language and Indonesian is the target language. The data is collected by using *aegis sub*, an app widely used to create and edit movies subtitles, so the researcher can easily pull the English and Indonesian texts as well as the timing for the texts to appear on screen. Therefore, the method of listen-and-note is not needed. The data is collected and grouped into one category, i.e. expressions that don't contain semantic meaning. The grouped expressions are then analyzed

using deletion theory related to delivery of meaning through four semiotic aspects in movies.

### III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The following is the discussion on translations of functional, cumulative adjectives, and responsive expressions in the movie *13 Hours: Secret Soldiers of Benghazi* and *Ice Age 5: Collision Course*. Some of those expressions are translated while some others are not.

#### A. Translated expressions

##### *13 Hours: Secret Soldiers of Benghazi*

English	Indonesian
40 00:05:20,354 --> 00:05:21,853 Oh, come on. She's mad at me, she's not mad at you.	40 00:05:20,354 --> 00:05:21,853 Oh ayolah. Dia marah padaku, Dia tidak marah padamu.
80 00:06:54,148 --> 00:06:55,847 Fuck that.	74 00:06:54,147 --> 00:06:55,847 Sialan.
373 00:19:58,298 --> 00:19:59,298 Whoa, whoa, whoa...	350 00:19:58,298 --> 00:19:58,930 Whoa, whoa, whoa ...
388 00:20:51,784 --> 00:20:52,784 Watch out!	365 00:20:51,784 --> 00:20:52,717 Awas!
563 00:29:04,510 --> 00:29:06,343 Come on.	533 00:29:04,509 --> 00:29:06,343 Ayolah.
2217 02:05:48,975 --> 02:05:51,109 A fucking massive heavy force.	2059 02:05:48,974 --> 02:05:51,109 Sebuah angkatan bersenjata lengkap masif.

The expressions in the above data are responsive and cumulative adjective. Responsive expressions identified are: *oh, come on*, found in the English texts (40, 563) and translated into Indonesian (40, 533). The number of characters for each subtitle text is small, i.e. 12 characters in the English text (40) *oh, come on* and 10 characters in the Indonesian text (40) *oh, ayolah*. The number of English characters (563) for *come on* is 8 and the Indonesian subtitle (533) *ayolah* 7 characters. The appearance of these responsive expressions does not exceed the maximum number of characters per line, i.e. 38 or 40, so they are translated. However, these can be deleted or not translated since they do not contain significant semantic meaning. The expression *fuck that* (80) is translated as *sialan* in Indonesian (74). The expression *fuck that* conveys annoyance, impatience, and insults. These words are considered slang and taboo (Oxford: 2010). This expression appears because *13 Hours: Secret Soldiers of Benghazi* is an action movie for adults, so the use of slangs and taboos are apparent. This expression is translated because it only contains small number of characters: 10 characters in English (80) *fuck that* and 7 characters in Indonesian (74) *sialan*. Anger,

impatience, or insults in movies are not only conveyed through utterances. They can also be shown in scenes, music, or sound effects. Subtitlers have two options if there's only small number of characters in the text, i.e. to translate or not to translate. In the case of slangs and taboos as mentioned above, the subtitler chose to translate the expressions because they only contain small number of characters. A responsive expression *whoa* is also found in the English subtitles (373), which is translated into Indonesian (350). *Whoa* is an expression of surprise, interest, or attraction (Oxford: 2008). There are 19 characters in *Whoa, whoa, whoa...*, both in English (373) and Indonesian (350). This expression doesn't contain semantic meaning, but can be translated three times as a repetition as it is in the source language. In subtitling, repetitive forms can be deleted, e.g. three words become one. This saves number of characters and viewers do not have to read long texts as the result of the repetition. The next responsive expression is *watch out!* in English (388) that contains 10 characters and translated into *awas* in Indonesian (365) and contains 5 characters. This expression is also translated, even though it doesn't

contain significant semantic meaning. Some cumulative adjectives expressions are identified, like *a fucking massive heavy force* in the English text that is translated into *sebuah angkatan bersenjata lengkap massif* in Indonesian (2059). The strategy to translate cumulative adjectives expressions above is borrowing; the word *massive* is translated as *masif*

because the meaning in the context of the movie is a massive heavy force. Nevertheless, the word *lengkap* is sufficient even without the word *masif* because the scene shown to the viewers is of a massive force.

The movie *Ice Age 5: Collision Course*

English	Indonesian
221 00:10:57,920 --> 00:10:59,239 Yeah, women.	108 00:10:55,916 --> 00:10:58,798 Wanita. /Ya, wanita.
256 00:12:11,800 --> 00:12:13,597 Come on. Let's get you cleaned up. 862	132 00:12:11,432 --> 00:12:13,638 Ayo, kita bersihkan dirimu.
00:39:41,280 --> 00:39:42,679 All right, kids.	489 00:39:41,150 --> 00:39:42,735 Baiklah, Anak-anak.

In *Ice Age 5: Collision Course*, only responsive expressions are identified, they are: *yeah* in the English text (221) which is translated as *ya* in Indonesian (108), *come on* in English (256) is translated as *ayo* in Indonesian (132), *all right* in English (862) is translated as *baiklah* in Indonesian (489). These three expressions are translated because of the small number of characters per line, i.e. not more than 38 or 40 characters. They also don't

contain significant semantic meaning, so depending on the context and number of characters allowed per line, the subtitler may choose whether to translate them or not.

#### B. Untranslated expressions

Movie *13 Hours: Secret Soldiers of Benghazi*

English	Indonesian
53 00:05:52,953 --> 00:05:54,419 (MEN ARGUING)	-
4 00:01:24,652 --> 00:01:25,652 (GUNSHOT)	-
36 00:05:07,875 --> 00:05:09,641 (LAUGHS)	-

Untranslated expressions in *13 Hours: Secret Soldiers of Benghazi* are those containing additional information, like *(MEN ARGUING)*, *(GUNSHOT)*, and *(LAUGHS)*. Each appearing text is only additional information for the viewers during fighting, shootings, and laughing scenes. The additional information is not translated into the target language because the meaning is already conveyed through images and sound effects. During fights or arguments, meaning is delivered through scenes and sounds of people fighting or arguing; in shooting scenes, meaning is delivered through images and sounds of gunshots; and in laughing scenes, meaning is already delivered in images and

sounds of laughters. This is the appropriate strategy to be used by the subtitler, since those three additional piece of information don't contain significant semantic meaning in the movie.

The movie *Ice Age 5: Collision Course*

English	Indonesian
41 00:03:19,880 --> 00:03:20,880 (SCREAMING)	
50 00:04:04,520 --> 00:04:05,839 (GRUNTING)	
243 00:11:45,200 --> 00:11:46,633 Ew! Your breath is awful.	125 00:11:44,570 --> 00:11:47,250 Napasmubau. / Apa yang terjadidenganmu?

Untranslated expressions in *Ice Age 5: Collision Course* are those containing additional information and responsive expressions. The expressions that contain additional information are (SCREAMING) and (GRUNTING) in the English texts number (41) and (50). Both expressions are not translated into Indonesian as they do not contain semantic meaning. Although (SCREAMING) is not translated, the meaning is conveyed through images and sound effects. This also applies to (GRUNTING). The responsive expression *Ew* in English (243) is not

translated because it doesn't contain significant semantic meaning. All deleted expressions do not affect the delivery of meaning to the viewers, because there are four semiotic aspects in movies that convey meaning concurrently: dialogues, subtitles, music, and images.

#### C. Translated and untranslated expressions Movie *13 Hours: Secret Soldiers of Benghazi*

English	Indonesian
375 00:20:11,344 --> 00:20:13,344 Well, this is my 12th.	352 00:20:11,343 --> 00:20:13,344 Nah, ini tur ku yang ke 12.
425 00:22:22,041 --> 00:22:23,708 JACK: Well, you'll be home.	401 00:22:22,041 --> 00:22:23,708 Kau akan pulang.
522 00:26:27,954 --> 00:26:29,594 Well, that's heartwarming.	497 00:26:27,953 --> 00:26:28,986 Itu menghangatkan hati.

Functional expression *well* that doesn't contain semantic meaning in the subtitles of *13 Hours: Secret Soldiers of Benghazi* is translated as *nah* in Indonesian (352) while in some other parts it's not translated (401, 497). Translation or deletion of functional expressions can be applied depending on the number of characters in the subtitles as well as the context. In the case mentioned above, the subtitle text is translated and the number of characters is

below the maximum limit, i.e. 38 or 40. Moreover, it's translated because a context is required to emphasize certain information, even if the functional expression does not contain semantic meaning. Deletion of functional expressions is also applied in short subtitles in unnecessary contexts.

#### The movie *Ice Age 5: Collision Course*

English	Indonesian
231 00:11:19,520 --> 00:11:21,078 Well, Ellie giggled.	116 00:11:19,074 --> 00:11:22,135 Tapi Ellie tertawa geli Lalu dia bergoyang-goyang.
232 00:11:21,280 --> 00:11:22,599 And then she wiggled.	
624 00:29:39,560 --> 00:29:42,074 Well, Buck has saved our lives before, right?	335 00:29:39,149 --> 00:29:42,034 Buck sudah menyelamatkan Hidup kita sebelumnya, 'kan?-

The functional expression *well* is also found in *Ice Age 5: Collision Course*. It is apparent that *well* is both deleted and translated from English to Indonesian. *Well* in the English text (231) is translated into *tapi* (116), while the English translation (624) is deleted in the Indonesian text (353). Translation of *well* as *tapi* is applied because the information being emphasized is related to the previous piece of information, while in fact, the functional expression of *well* doesn't contain semantic meaning. The translator chose to translate the expression based on the consideration of small number of characters.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

Based on the conducted research, it is concluded that in the movies *13 Hours: Secret Soldiers of Benghazi* and *Ice Age 5: Collision Course*, three types of expressions have been identified: functional expressions that don't contain semantic meaning, cumulative adjectives expressions, and responsive expressions. Some of those expressions are translated while some others are not; there's one expression that is both translated and not translated in some parts of the movies. The translated expressions are responsive ones, like *oh, fuck that, whoa, watch out, come on, all right, and yeah* as well as cumulative adjectives, like *a fucking massive heavy force*. The types of expressions that are not translated are responsive utterances like *Ew* in the animated movie *Ice Age 5*, expressions that indicate additional information like *(MEN ARGUING)*, *(GUNSHOT)*, *(LAUGHS)* in the action movie *13 Hours*, and expressions for additional information like *(SCREAMING)* and *(GRUNTING)* in *Ice Age 5*. The translated and untranslated expressions are

functional expressions that do not contain semantic meaning, like *well* in both movies. The decision to translate those expressions are made based on the number of characters per line and the contexts in the movies, while deletion is chosen to cut number of characters used per line and unnecessary semantic meaning.

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